

# ***Quarterly Progress Report For USAID Vietnam***

## **I. Name of Grant**

1. Name of Grantee: Health Volunteers Overseas
2. Grant Number: Grant # 492-G-00-98-00011-00
3. Title of Project: HVO's Vietnam Rehabilitation Project
4. Date of Report Submission: 26 July 2005
5. Reporting Period: April 2005 - June 2005

## **II. Goals, Objectives and Progress to date**

### **1. Goals:**

Project Goal: To empower people with disabilities and strengthen the institutional capacities in support of people with disabilities

### **2. Summary of progress taken**

#### Support the activities of the Disability Forum

##### *Legal status*

The Mobilizing Committee for establishing the Disability Forum as a legal association continued to negotiate with the Hanoi DOLISA throughout the quarter, re-writing sections of the draft charter at their insistence. As anticipated, the simultaneous application of the Bright Future group for legal recognition caused considerable confusion.

NCCD was called upon by DOLISA to meet with both committees and to propose a merger. This suggestion had earlier been rejected on the grounds that the two proposed associations would implement different types of activities. However DOLISA indicated that there would be no approval forthcoming for either group unless they consolidated their efforts.

Given that ultimatum, at the end of the quarter the two committees agreed to submit a single revised charter for a single association. The process of negotiating an acceptable structure and a founding document for a consolidated Hanoi association will begin in July.

Consensus is that this restructured association will eventually meet with DOLISA's approval, but some doubt remains as to whether it will be truly independent. In order to continue the Forum's information gathering and dissemination functions, it may be necessary to establish a separate entity.

In addition to the voluntary membership association proposed by the joint committee, a new local NGO might take on the current functions of the Disability Forum. As a partner to the association, an NGO with a small personnel roster would handle day-to-day office work under the supervision of a board of directors.

A survey of currently available legal structures reveals very limited options. In a meeting on June 16, the multinational NGO "CIDSE" recounted their experiences in converting the organization from international to local. A very long and drawn-out process resulted in a decision to establish two separate local organizations, one registered with the Hanoi Peoples Committee and the other with VUSTA (Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations). Neither of those affiliations appears to be logically appropriate, but in the absence of an "NGO law", many non-profit groups have used similar strategies.

### *April 18*

A celebration of the National Day for People with Disabilities took place on Sunday, April 17, with the theme Access to Barrier-free Environments. The Disability Forum's Events Working Group handled all aspects of organization for the day, which included information sharing, music, games and discussions. The U.S. Ambassador addressed the crowd of about three hundred, stressing that people with disabilities should be integrated into all facets of society.

### *Training*

Leaders from the central and south regions of the country were invited to Hanoi in conjunction with the visit of the assessment team from USAID in May. In addition to meeting with the team to share their opinions and insights, the PWD leaders joined their counterparts from the Hanoi area in a management training course on May 20 and 21. This was part of a continuing series of courses offered by HVO which deal with issues of leadership, group development and administration of self-help groups.

Future plans are to develop an in-house training capability in order to better focus on specific issues of relevance to PWDs and to reduce costs. The local NGO structure mentioned above will include trainers on the roster.

On June 21, HVO and NCCD offered a half-day workshop on the newly published Circular #19, dealing with the Employment Fund. Hanoi-area DOLISAs, VABED and PWD leaders participated in a lively discussion of the implications of the new law for employment of people with disabilities.

The Disability Forum's Communications Officer, Nguyen Lan Anh, was a delegate to the regional Young Women's Feminist Advocacy and Leadership Institute in Bangkok from June 13-18. Ms Lan Anh was one of the few persons

with disabilities to add her perspectives to discussions on feminist leadership and advocacy, integrated approaches to social justice and the role of young women in societies of the region.

### *Self-help groups*

On May 25, the *Vinh Bao* group of Hai Phong became the latest association to achieve legal recognition by their provincial government. They were enthusiastic participants in Hanoi's celebration of the National Day for People with Disabilities. Planning has begun for their first congress and election of officers next quarter, an activity that HVO will support. The new officers will also be included in the on-going process of leadership development and management training.

### *New sub-group*

During the regular plenary meeting of the Disability Forum on May 12, the establishment of a new sub-group was proposed by representatives of VSO and MCNV. The focus would be on technical information-sharing and coordination among project-implementing members of the Forum. The concept was approved by the plenary and seven topics selected for consideration in a new series of meetings.

### Support VIETCOT students in the 1-year orthotics specialty course

The final academic semester ended this quarter, and exams were administered (no results available yet). The students vacated their dormitory accommodations and went home for the summer break. Clinical Placement will begin next quarter with the assignment of groups of trainees to Bach Mai and Viet Duc hospitals, the VIETCOT center and Hai Phong.

### The Quality Assurance Project in Danang

Drs. Hugh Watts and Sharon DeMuth, of the CP team, returned to Danang June 27 - July 1<sup>st</sup>. They spent a good part of their visit checking on the progress made since last November in both the CP and CVA areas. There seemed to be confusion over some of the charts and record-keeping that the teams had established earlier. These were reviewed and issues clarified, often through modification of the forms.

Dr. Watts and Dr. DeMuth spent a lot of time working with Huyen, the woman who has replaced Xuan as interpreter/international relations contact. They ensured that both Huyen and Barbara, a long-term German PT working in the Center, were aware of the patient reporting forms and understood their importance.

A meeting with Dr. Alex Papilaya, Dreyfus Foundation's expert in Problem Solving for Better Hospitals, will be arranged in late July. Based on the experience HVO has had in Hue working with the Dreyfus Foundation, we wish to pursue their expertise as it relates to Quality Assurance, which has proved particularly successful in Indonesia.

#### Strengthen the university linkages

A follow-up workshop with the Dreyfus Foundation and Temple University was conducted on May 25-27. Four groups of senior nursing students presented their problem-solving projects in rural communities with seed funding from the Dreyfus Health Foundation. From May 28-30, a repeat workshop on Problem Solving for Better Health Nursing was organized for third-year nursing students. This concept has now become a regular credit course for the bachelor of nursing program in Hue.

Faculty members from Temple University then worked with the nursing faculty and other departments to address issues in specialties such as obstetric, pediatric, psychiatric and surgical nursing. A visiting team of professionals included Dr. Black - Obstetrical Nursing, Dr. Zygmunt - Surgical Nursing, Ms. Pron - Pediatric Nursing, and Ms. Bender - Psychiatric Nursing. The total number of participants was 50 nursing and other related departments' staff and nursing students.

#### Develop the professional capacities of nurses, rehabilitation doctors, and physical therapists

In late June, Dr. Jill Derstine, RN came to Ho Chi Minh City to discuss the curriculum for a masters program in nursing requested by the Faculty of Nursing and Medical Technology.

The objective of the curriculum is twofold: to train teachers and managers. The beginning portion of the proposal covered resources such as library, classrooms, and teachers. Every nurse in Vietnam who has a masters from Thailand will be a teacher plus several foreign teachers. Of the foreign teachers, there will be faculty from Friendship Bridge and at least one from Texas Tech.

Planning was underway for a workshop on Spinal Cord Injury to be conducted in Danang in collaboration with VVAF, HCMC Spinal Cord Unit, and the Royal Talbot Spinal Cord Unit. This will be a sharing exercise between all of the stakeholders in Danang. The outcome would be a better understanding of a treatment process of Spinal Cord Injury and a better collaboration between and within Danang Rehabilitation Center, General Hospital, Hospital C and Danang Sanatorium Center.

### **3. Impact**

This quarter was, once again, a busy one. Legalization of the Disability Forum continues to be a troublesome task, as new barriers are thrown in its way. The task force working on legalization is a dedicated one, however, and they are attempting to find the loopholes to achieve their goal.

The Temple/Dreyfus team was very pleased to see the progress that had been made among the nursing students with their pilot projects. The new group of students was able to move far more quickly with their workshop, since the model had been established last year.

The collaboration with the Dreyfus Foundation and our respect for the results they have achieved led to the discussions about extending their work to assist the Quality Assurance Project in Danang. We are anticipating a visit from Dr. Papilaya at the end of July to get a better understanding of the work he has done in Indonesia and the significant changes that have occurred there in hospital administration.

Project Director Larry Wolfe was on home leave during the latter part of this reporting period but his very capable staff handled several volunteer visits and crucial meetings quite smoothly and efficiently.

### **III. Expenditures**

The financial report will be submitted separately.

### **IV. Plan of Action for the next quarter**

#### Support the activities of the Disability Forum

##### *Training*

Future plans are to develop an in-house training capability in order to better focus on specific issues of relevance to PWDs and to reduce costs. The local NGO structure to be established will include trainers on the roster.

##### Strengthen the university linkages:

During Jill Derstine's visit to Hue she reviewed a list of equipment that Hue Medical College had requested for the nursing department. A geriatric manikin

was considered to be a top priority so HVO will procure that and arrange for its delivery.

Develop the professional capacities of nurses, rehabilitation doctors, and physical therapists

As requested, HVO will sponsor three nursing curriculum workshops in the next quarter. The first would be with the faculty and the graduate committee to discuss the proposal to prepare for the assessment visit of the two ministries. There will be representatives from the ministries and HVO experts invited. The second would be to discuss the proposal with representatives of both ministries and some representatives from the nursing national committee to garner support for the program. The third would be with small groups of the faculty to finalize plans for the curriculum.

In addition, textbooks will be needed for the new program as well as equipment, especially for physical assessment.

Dr. Cuong Pho will conduct a follow-up course on mobilization for the physical therapy department instructors at the University of Medicine and Pharmacy. After the student course in February, HVO volunteer Kim Dunleavy felt that the teachers themselves were not confident in their skills. Dr. Cuong will work with them to refresh their skills and boost their confidence in teaching the course.

Plans are underway to send a representative from the University of Medicine and Pharmacy to attend the World Congress of Physical Therapists in Seoul, Korea at the end of October.

ACRONYMS:

APCD:	Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability
CIDSE:	A European consortium of NGOs
DOLISA:	Department of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs
ISPO:	International Society for Prosthetics & Orthotics
JICA:	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MCNV:	Medical Committee of Netherlands, Vietnam
MOH:	Ministry of Health
MOLISA:	Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs
NCCD:	National Coordinating Committee for Disabilities
PWD:	People with Disabilities
TAG:	HVO's Technical Advisory Group

VABED:	Vietnam Association of Business Enterprises of People With Disabilities
VIETCOT:	Vietnamese Training Centre for Orthopaedic Technologists
VINAREHA:	Vietnam Rehabilitation Association
VNA:	Vietnam Nurses' Association
VNAH:	Vietnam Assistance for the Handicapped
VSO:	Volunteers in Service Overseas
VVAF:	Vietnam Veterans' of America Foundation